



# Base Realignment and Closure

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## Urgent care center replaces Wilford Hall ER

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The Wilford Hall emergency department closed on July 1 and a new Urgent Care Center, or UCC, is now in operation 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in the ED's old location.

"Our primary goal is to provide medical care to Lackland's basic military trainees and technical school students. However, we are also staffed to provide care to patients, over 2 years old, who need treatment for acute minor illnesses or injuries," said Maj. Erika Hooper, UCC Flight commander.

Hooper is quick to define minor illnesses and injuries.

"Colds, flu, animal bites, rashes, and sprained ankles are the types of cases we are equipped to handle," Hooper said. "Anyone who needs emergency assistance should go to Brooke Army Medical Center or the nearest emergency department."



Wilford Hall has launched an aggressive publicity campaign to help patients understand the UCC's limitations and the importance of seeking emergency care at a facility equipped to handle their medical needs.

"We have conducted TV and radio broadcasts, published newspaper articles, put up posters and distributed pamphlets," Hooper said. "It's vital that people with chest pains and stroke symptoms, or those who have suffered a serious trauma not come here because it will just delay their care."

The 2005 Base Realignment and Closure law directed that all inpatient care at Wilford Hall must move to BAMC by Sept. 15, 2011.

"Patients need to understand that we have been moving staff and services to BAMC for months," said Lt. Col. (Dr.) Patrick Muehlberger, 59th Emergency Medical Squadron

Commander. “We no longer have the ability to perform the life-saving procedures Wilford Hall patients have come to expect.

“Our cardio catheterization lab has moved to BAMC and experienced surgeons are not available 24/7 here anymore,” Muehlberger added. “Wilford Hall is almost finished transitioning into an ambulatory surgical center and it’s potentially dangerous for patients with serious illnesses and injuries to ignore that fact.”

Patients are urged to call the UCC at 292-7331 for more information, especially if there is uncertainty about which facility can best handle their medical needs.